



MARCHING ALONG



WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT) Newsletter

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Aug-Oct 2022



Attendees at the WRANS Memorial Service at HMAS Harman on Saturday 22 October 2022.

Newsletter of the WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT)
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WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT)

August – October 2022

WRANS - Naval Women Association (ACT)

WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT) - Activities

From the Secretary

This period from August to October has been a busy time for our association so we have a lot more to report in this newsletter. Also there are lots of photos to share. Hope you enjoy reading about our activities and hope that they will encourage you to attend more events in the future.

As this will be the last newsletter for this year, I would like to thank you all for your support over the year and hope that you and your families all have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Judith Rowe
Secretary

New WRANS ACT Web Site

Be sure to visit our new website at www.wransact.com.au. The new website has been developed with the assistance of Pipsqueak Web Designs. The Association thanks ex-Wrans Gayle and Jackie for their efforts in producing this more modern and updated version website.

The previous settings of www.wransact.org and the email addresses associated with that page are still operational with the new website.

If you have any suggestions or comments please advise the Secretary at secretary@wransact.org.

HMAS Canberra Memorial Service

On Tuesday 9 August, Vice President Sigi Kropp attended the Memorial Service to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the loss of HMAS Canberra (I). Commander Danielle Radnidge (CO of HMAS Harman) and Sigi were called up together to lay wreaths at the memorial on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin. The RAN heavy cruiser HMAS Canberra was severely damaged off Guadalcanal (Solomon Islands) in an attack by a powerful Japanese naval force in what became known as the Battle of Savo Island. HMAS Canberra sunk on 9 August 1942 with 193 casualties including 84 killed or died of wounds.

Vietnam Veterans Day Remembrance Service

On Thursday 18 August, Secretary Judith Rowe attended the Vietnam Veterans Day Remembrance Service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Anzac Parade. She followed the growing trend of laying a book ('Radio Girl' by David Dufty) rather than a wreath. The inscribed books are presented to local school libraries. 18 August was chosen as Vietnam Veterans Day as it is the anniversary of the battle of Long Tan in 1966. On that day 108 Australian and New Zealand soldiers fought a pitched battle against 2,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong Troops in a rubber plantation near Long Tan. The Australians prevailed but lost 18 killed and 24 wounded.



Memorial Service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Anzac Parade.

Ops Room Association Reunion QLD 2022

By Pauline Gribble
Heather Milward (Gunner)
and Pauline Gribble
(McCormick) attended the
2022 QLD Ops Room
Association Reunion between
2nd and 4th September 2022.



Ops Room Association Reunion QLD

The Association is a formation or gathering of former and serving personnel of the Royal Australian Navy or other Navies, who have completed Radio Direction Finders (RDF), Radar Plotters (RP) and Combat System Operators (CSO).



The reunion was held at The Mantra -Twin Towns Hotel in Coolangatta with the three events of a meet and greet, a general meeting and a formal dinner. People mainly attended the reunion from across Australia but also from the United States of America. Heather and I were able to catch up with WRANS who were not able to attend the WRANS reunion in QLD.

From left to right: Heather Milward, Joan O'Connor, Pauline Gribble, Lorrae Johnson, Kaye Morgan, Barb Jeffrey, unknown, Christine Cameron, Marlene Walters, and Christine Schneider.

2022 Queensland National Navy Women's Reunion

By Pauline Gribble



From left to right: Juanita Strachan; Iris Wilson; Di Sell; Joan Hogan; Beth Roberts; Rae Milfull; Pauline Gribble; Kerry Macklin; Jill Kelly; Meiks Flach; unknown; unknown; Heather Milward; Sigi Kropp; unknown; unknown; Margaret Marr; Sue Shaw (only top of head); Carol Harris; unknown; Kate Smith; Shirley Maughan; Chris Sutherland

Many ACT WRANS converged in Brisbane from 30 September until 02 October to attend the Queensland National Navy Women's Reunion. This was the first WRANS reunion since the 2018 Port Stephens reunion.

Over 300 women from across Australia and all ranks categories arrived at the Hilton Hotel for accommodation and where reunion functions occurred. There was ample free time to catch up with friends outside the scheduled events. The activities included a meet and greet, a formal dinner and a band and a farewell brunch. The events were full of laughter, loud conversations and fun. A few current serving women also attended, which I think, were a bit surprised on how the old WRANS could party.



Di Lawrence, Heather Milward and Pauline Gribble at the Queensland WRANS Reunion.

Some women are nervous about attending WRANS reunions because of fear of not knowing anyone. Well, do not worry because that feeling only lasts until you check in or attend the first function. WRANS are recognised by other WRANS and if they do not know you, they soon will.

The next WRANS reunion is scheduled for Hobart 14 to 16 March 2025.

Juanita Strachan won one of the raffles. You had to pre buy tickets before the event. The prize was a gift voucher to value of \$500 and this WRANS doll was a bonus. The doll did the rounds of the table having a few drinks.



WRANS Memorial Service

Due to the rather wet weather on the day, the annual WRANS Memorial Service at HMAS Harman on Saturday 22 October 2022 had to be relocated to the Bonshaw Mess. Harman staff set up seats and a make-shift memorial using the Marion Stevens chair in the covered barbeque area at the side of the mess. The Naval Cadets from TS Canberra still provided the Catafalque Party and a Navy bugler played the Last Post and The Rouse. A number of people, including a couple of the VIP guests pulled out at the last minute but we still had a good turnout and the service went very well.



The assembled guests at the WRANS Memorial Service.

Sue Wheeler was the Master of Ceremonies, Chaplain Cath Wynn-Jones led us in prayer, and Pauline Gribble let us in the Naval Prayer and Pat McCabe read the Naval Ode. At the completion of the service Vice President Sigi Kropp presenting the CO HMAS Harman, Commander Danielle

Vice President Sigi Kropp presenting the CO HMAS Harman, Commander Danielle Radnidge with a framed WRANS pennant and a photograph of the WRANS stained glass window in the Chapel at Garden Island in Sydney. They are to be displayed with the Marion Stevens Chair.





Radnidge with a framed WRANS pennant and a photograph of the WRANS stained glass window in the Chapel at Garden Island in Sydney. They are to be displayed in the mess with the Marion Stevens Chair.

The refreshment after the service was a good chance for a catch-up with some interstate visitors and our members enjoyed talking with the young cadets and the staff from Harman who joined us. The committee are very grateful for the tremendous effort put in by the Harman staff.

Standing from left to right: Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Amy Johanson (XO HMAS Harman); Chaplain Cath Wynn-Jones; Pat McCabe; Pauline Gribble; Judith Rowe; Sigi Kropp; Commander Danielle Radnidge (CO HMAS Harman); and LCDR Sue Wheeler.

Seated in the front row: Rae Milfull; Christine Lamb; Merle Hare; and Warrant Officer of the Navy Deb Butterworth.

Marion Stevens Chair

WRAN No 5 Marion Stevens joined the RAN Wireless/Transmitting Station Canberra as one of the first 14 women to join the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS) in 1941. The same RAN communications station was subsequently commissioned as HMAS *Harman* on 1 July 1943.

The chair comprises a tapestry of WWII call signs, drawn from Marion's memory and sewn by hand into the fabric, which took Marion 14 months to complete. At the time of the sinking of HMAS *Sydney*, lost in November 1941 to the German raider HSK *Kormoran*, there were suggestions that operators at *Harman* may have missed *Sydney*'s distress calls. Marion's tapestry serves to dispel this suggestion by recording that *Sydney* was not fitted with the equipment required for *Harman* to receive such messages. *Sydney* could only transmit in W/T (Morse) not R/T (voice).



The Marion Stevens Chair was used as a stand-in WRANS memorial.

Marion learnt her telegraphist skills with the Women's Emergency Signalling Corps, formed by Florence McKenzie. Marion's rise through the ranks was rapid and as a Chief Petty Officer she became the first female to take charge of a Navy unit, the Molonglo W/T Station. Marion's term as Officer in Charge of Molonglo ended in early 1945 when she was posted to HMAS *Cerberus* to undertake her Officer Training Course. Marion was subsequently promoted to Third Officer WRANS on 10 May 1945, returning to HMAS *Harman* where she remained until the end of the war.

With the demobilisation and disbandment of the WRANS, Marion returned to civilian life and studied music and singing at the Sydney Conservatorium. She later toured Australia and New Zealand with the Gilbert and Sullivan Company. With the reforming of the WRANS in 1951, Marion rejoined and served until September 1955.

Morning Tea and Lunches



Wednesday 3 August Morning Tea

Back row: Di Bodsworth; Sue Shaw; Juanita Strachan; and Chris Hennessy.

Middle row: Pauline Gribble; Janice Stewart; Sylvia Sinfield; and Judith Rowe.

Front row: Gaye Doolan; Merle Hare; and Dot Weston

Sunday 21 August Lunch

Back row: Di Sell; Olwyn-Ann Cook; Rae Milfull; Dollah West; Heather Milward; and Margaret Manley.

Middle row: Rosemarie Millar; Beth Roberts; Sue Wheeler; and Tanya.

Front row: Pauline Gribble; Heather Schmitzer and Judith Rowe.



Thursday 1 September Morning Tea

Back row: Dot Weston; Juanita Strachan; Margaret Manley; and Gaye Doolan.

Front row: Judith Rowe; Kerry Holmes; Rae Milfull; and Merle Hare.

Sunday 18 September Lunch

Back row: Di Sell; Trish Goddard; Olwyn-Ann Cook; Heather Milward; Dollah West; Natalie Read; and Dot Weston.

Front row: Janice Stewart; Pauline Gribble; and Merle Hare.





Tuesday 4 October Morning Tea

Back row: Natalie Read; Sue Wheeler; Sylvia Sinfield.

Middle row: Di Bodsworth; Lyn McCoy; Chris Hennessy; Sigi Kropp; and Alison Gillett.

Front row: Janice Stewart; Bridget MacKenzie (Dot's grand-daughter); Dot Weston; Merle Hare; and Pauline Gribble.

Note. There was no lunch in October as we had our annual memorial service.

Christmas Lunch

The WRANS Christmas lunch will be held on Saturday 19 November 2022 at Yowani Country Club, 455 Northbourne Ave, Lyneham, Canberra. Partners and friends are welcome to attend. Please arrive at the venue at 1230 so we can sit down as a group for lunch at 1300.

The charity we will be supporting this year is ALHZEIMERS ACT instead of the secret Santa.

Please advise Sigi Kropp by email kropp@netspace.net.au if you are attending before the 08_November 2022.

Lunch will cost \$46 per person, paid in advance and will include alternate meal placements:

The two main courses are:

Char grilled grain fed sirloin steak caramelised Spanish onion jam and creamy pepper sauce, or

Roasted chicken breast with brie and asparagus stuffing wrapped in prosciutto on white wine cream reduction

The two dessert dishes are:

White hazelnut chocolate mousse, or

Sticky date pudding.

Please advise Sigi Kropp if you have any dietary requirements

Payment by 08 November either:

Online by direct transfer. The account details are –

BSB Number 633 000

Account number 120 827 027

Account name WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT)

Payee Reference – your Surname/Christmas 22

or

By cheque made out to the WRANS – Naval Womens' Association (ACT) and sent to:

The Treasurer,

WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT),

PO Box 402,

WODEN ACT 2606

Remember if attending, please

- Please email Sigi Kropp by email kropp@netspace.net.au by 08_November
- Pay the treasurer \$46 per person by 08 November.
- Arrival at venue at 1230 hours.
- Advise Sigi of any dietary requirements.

ACT Office of Seniors & Veterans News

The ACT Office of Seniors & Veterans has many services available to Veterans in the ACT. Information on this is located at <https://www.act.gov.au/veterans/home>

DVA News

AWM Council Member Appointment

The Albanese Government will recommend the Governor-General appoint the Hon Kim Beazley AC as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial.

Minister Keogh said during Mr Beazley's term as Defence Minister, he was responsible for the establishment of the Royal Australian Navy's submarine program and he's continued to work closely with the veteran community as the Patron of RSL WA.

DVA Consultation on Legislation Reform

Consultation on reforming veterans' legislation has commenced today with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) seeking submissions from the community.

The Australian Government recently agreed to Recommendation 1 of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Interim Report, which called for the development and passage of legislation to simplify and harmonise the framework for veterans' compensation, rehabilitation and other entitlements.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs the Hon. Matt Keogh said the Government is determined to deliver on its commitment to implement this recommendation in accordance with the timeline set out by the Royal Commission.

A significant investigation of the legislative framework has already been completed by the Productivity Commission in its 2019 inquiry report A Better Way to Support Veterans. The Royal Commission identified recommendations in this report for the Government to consider as part of this reform process and we are now seeking feedback on both the recommendations made by the Productivity Commission and the Royal Commission in relation to legislative reform.

Those wishing to provide feedback can do so, anonymously if they wish, by 14 November 2022 at <https://www.dva.gov.au/legislationconsultation2022> or by emailing PCConsultation2022@dva.gov.au

Pension Increases

The DVA Compensation payments were increased on 20th September 2022 in line with the usual CPI/MTAWE Indexation increase.

The Federal Budget of 2022-23 that was tabled in October 2022 included the election promise of a \$1,000 per annum increase to the TPI Compensation payment. The legislation should be passed sometime in November so that the increase can commence as at 1st January 2023.

Royal Commission Update

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide is continuing, and will recommence in Darwin on 1st August 2022 and then in Darwin on 28th November 2022. An interim report was provided by the Commissioners on the 11th August 2022 which is at <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/interim-report>. The final report is due to be tabled on 17th June 2024.

OPEN ARMS
Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling, provides support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Free and confidential help is available 24/7.

Important Dates

Royal Commission started –	8 July 2021
Rent Assistance Eligibility for TPIs begins –	1 January 2022
Royal Commission Submissions close –	14 October 2022
Royal Commission Interim Report –	11 August 2022
Royal Commission Final Report –	17 June 2024

Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or visit www.OpenArms.gov.au

2022 calendar activities

November

- 02 Nov – Wed – morning tea commencing 1000 – Tulip's café Pialligo
- 19 Nov – Sat – Xmas lunch commencing 1230 – Yowani Country Club, Lyneham

December

- 01 Dec – Thurs – morning tea commencing 1000 – Tulip's café Pialligo
- 18 Dec – Sun – monthly lunch commencing 1200 – Ainslie Football Club, Ainslie

Calendar of events for 2023

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
January	Sun	15	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
February	Wed	1	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
February	Sat	11	1100	General Meeting, AGM and Lunch	Canberra Southern Cross Club Woden
February	Sun	19	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
March	Thu	2	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
March	Sun	19	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
April	Tue	4	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
April	Sun	16	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
April	Tue	25	TBA	Anzac Day March	TBA
May	Wed	3	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
May	Sun	21	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
May	Sat	27	1100	General Meeting and Lunch	Canberra Southern Cross Club Woden
June	Thu	1	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
June	Sun	18	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
July	Tue	4	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
July	Sun	16	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
August	Wed	2	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
August	Sun	20	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
September	Thur	7	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
September	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
September	Sat	23	1100	General Meeting and Lunch	Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden
October	Tues	3	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
October	Sun	15	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
October	Sat	21	1100	Memorial Service	HMAS Harman
November	Wed	1	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
November	TBA			Christmas Lunch	TBA
December	Thur	7	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
December	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Vacant
Vice President	Sigrid 'Sigi' Kropp (Engel)
Correspondence Secretary	Judith Rowe (Knight)
Minute Secretary	Judith Rowe (Knight)
Treasurer	Rachael 'Rae' Milfull (Cooper)
Assistant Treasurer/Membership:	Christine Lamb (McNicol)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Events Co-ordinator:	Pauline Gribble (McCormick)
Catering Sub-committee	
DVA/KOC Liaison:	Pat McCabe

EX-OFFICIO POSITIONS:

Webmaster:	Pat McCabe
Facebook Manager:	Rose van Dijk (Wood)
Welfare Officer:	Pat McCabe
Scrapbooking:	
Newsletter Editor:	Pat McCabe
Librarian:	Sigrid 'Sigi' Kropp (Engel)

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2023

Membership renewals are now due so if you have not already done so, could you please pay your annual membership subscription of \$20.00 before the next Annual General Meeting either by –

cash or by cheque made out to the WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT) and forwarded to

The Treasurer,
WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT),
PO Box 402,
WODEN ACT 2606

or if you prefer you could pay online by direct transfer. The account details are –

BSB Number 633 000
Account number 120 827 027
Account name WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT)

Payee Reference – your Surname/Mship 2023

**NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME JOINING FEE IS \$10.00 PLUS THE ANNUAL
\$20.00 SUBSCRIPTION**

(Application Form on website)

INVITE YOUR NAVY FRIENDS ALONG TO OUR MEETINGS!

Personal Details - New email address – have you moved?

We need to continually update our contact details so if you have changed address, email etc., would you please complete the following and either return it to the Membership Secretary, PO Box 402, Woden ACT 2606 or hand it in at the next General Meeting.

PERSONAL DETAILS – UPDATE

Surname Given Names

Address
.....

Telephone (Home) (Work)
(Mobile)

(Email address)